A person standing in front of a house

Description automatically generated

Carol’s

Birthday Poems

Carl Lahser

**Another Fine Birthday**

**Eighty-one Steps**

**Wishes for Another Year**

**Butchart Gardens**

**The Belem Market**

**Cat Street, Hong Kong**

**Peanut Man**

**Historical Perspective on Athen’s Weather**

**Sing**

**Ha Long Bay**

**Old Enough**

Another Fine Birthday

The painter Constable said,

“Nothing is ugly in this old world. “

Shouting girls from one side of the street

exude sexual defiance

in the way they challenge boys across the way

with their tinkling laughter.

Two mustached nuns dressed like penguins

walking side-by-side like penguins

in a flat-footed way

wave shyly as a passing Lowrider toots its horn.

A homeless woman sitting on a bus bench

eating potato chips out of her purse

mumbles to anyone and

holds up a finger to a passing police car.

A snotty infant paddles rapidly along the sidewalk

in a T-shirt, screaming:

his sister runs after him waving a diaper,

shouting for him to **come back this very minute**.

Time races and creeps and crawls

Minute by minute

Until another year has passed.

carl



Eighty-one steps

Eighty-one steps

Up the spiral stairs

Each passing near its origin

But always charging upwards

To the widow’s walk

To view the future

Amongst the clouds

And changing fortune

Carl

Wishes for Another year

81 Birthday Wishes

A evening walk in your neighborhood

In the evening cool as the sun sets

A morning walk along a beach

with a rising sun and scattered shells

hand in hand

A volume of verses

And a hot chocolate

When the cool winds blow

Happy Birthday

carl.

# Butchart Gardens

“What can we do with a borrow pit

After the limestone has been mined out”

Asked Mr. Butchart.

“Well”, says his wife.

“I think I will plant a garden”

She found the plants.

She scaled the walls.

She moved the rocks.

She planted her garden

And her dream came true.

So, will yours.

\*\*\*\*\*

**The Belem Market**

People everywhere in the cool of dawn,

produce to market and products back home

carried on the backs or heads of Indians and Creoles

before it gets hot and the sun, humidity and flies rise.

Displayed on palm leaf mats, everything you need-

fish, chicken, rice, bananas, voodoo charms

and they can fix your motorbike too.

# Cat Street, Hong Kong

Just off Hollywood Road in Hong Kong

Cat Street where, shoulder to shoulder,

we wandered the crowded flea market.

Our son spotted a bright red jacket

which he wanted to try on.

The old woman handed him a blue one

but our son insisted on the red.

In broken English, she explained the red

was the color for girl-children,

and she would not sell a red jacket

to a boy and allow him to be subject to ridicule.

In a world of the poor, a principled merchant.

**Peanut Man**

Whooeeete

Whooeeete

In the dusk

Out of the gathering night

Whooeeete

Hola!

Hola! Hola!

Cacahuetes caliente!

Cacahuetes picante!

(Peanuts hot and spicey)

Dogs howl

Children gather to follow the peanut man

Through warm dusty streets

Un centavo here

Dos centavos there

The small black steam engine

Is pulled along the village streets

His route ends at the town’s cantina

Where he sells most of his cacahuetes

And washes the dust from his throat

With a cerveza fresco

A nice cold beer.

**Historical Perspective on Athen’s Weather**

A cold April mist blowing off the Hymettas Hills

veiled the other side of the airport

as we stood waiting to board our flight

in the year of 1997.

In April of the year 1841

Hans Christian Andersen made a note’

“Heavy rain clouds hung

across the mountains of Hymettos:

the weather was gray and cold.”

Politics may change but not the weather.

**\*\*\*\*\***

**Sing**

Recall ancient wars and the stories of old

sing songs of protest and martyrs bold

sing of storms and weather fine

sing happy songs of love and wine

sing summer songs when the days are cold.

Sing!

\*\*\*\*\*

Hą Long Bay

Hą Long Bay, Vietnam

Vįnh Ha Long

Bay of the Descending Dragons

The 2,000 emerald karst islets

Were spit out by protective dragons

And jewels and jade

Sprang up in front of enemy ships

Hą Long – the place where mother dragon lived

Bάi Tú Long – where lived her children

Islets swathed in a hundred kinds of trees

Protecting Haiphong

Protecting Vietnam

A quiet night on the Bay

Watching Scorpio overhead

Hearing halyards slapping the mast

Listening to the creaking wooden hull

Quiet and a pot of tea.

Carl 28Oct11



Old Enough

Old enough to kiss a boy

Old enough to save or spend

Old enough to choose your life

Old enough to see the world

Old enough to stop counting

¡feliz cumpleaños¡

Happy Birthday

**Happy abirthday**

**Happy Birthday**

**Happy Birthday**

Happy Birthday